

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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R 201945Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7763
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMCONSUL BELIZE
USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AFSP, ELAB, ES
SUBJECT: PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE
POSITION

REF: STATE 092358 (NOTAL)

1. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THE LABOR-CAMPESINO SITUATION IN
EL SALVADOR DOES NOT LEND ITSELF TO REGIONALIZATION, NOR
DO THE USG LABOR REPORTING OR PROGRAM FUNCTIONS IN
EL SALVADOR. THUS WE DO NOT FEEL THIS EMBASSY WOULD BENEFIT
MATERIALEY FROM A REGIONAL CENTRAL AMERICAN LABOR ATTACHE
POSITION.

2. IN ADDITION TO FACTORS GENERALLY VALID IN THE REGION,
AND ALREADY EXPRESSED BY OTHER EMBASSIES, WHERE ARE A
NUMBER OF FACTORS WHICH PUT EL SALVADOR APART ON THIS
ISSUE. FIRST, UNTIL NORMAL RELATIONS ARE RESTORED WITH
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HONDURAS, A REGIONAL OFFICER LOCATED IN TEGUCIGALPA,
SIMPLY WOULD NOT BE RECEIVED AS WEEL AS HE SHOULD BY THE
GOES, OR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, INCLUDING LABOR GROUPS.
SECOND, THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR FREE LABOR DEVELOPMENT
(AIFLD) DOES NOT HAVE AN OFFICE HERE AND HAS ONLY MINIMAL
PROGRAMS WITH SALVADORAN LABOR AND CAMPESINO ORGANIZATIONS.
ITS FUTURE HERE IS UNCERTAIN. WE FIND EVEN THE AIFLD

EFFORTS TO DEVELOP COORDINATED PROGRAMS BETWEEN THE

SALVADORAN AND HONDURAN CAMPESINO MOVEMENTS TO BE QUIRE
STRAINED GIVEN THE HISTORY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES WITH THE STRONG CONFLICT-ORIENTED CAMPESINO
ASPECT.

3. WE FIND IT SOMEWHAT ANOMALOUS FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT
TO REGIONALIZE LABOR AFFAIRS, WHEN OTHER FUNCTIONS JUST
AS OR EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR US NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE NOT,
AND IN OUR VIEW SHOULD NOT BE, REGIONALIZED IN THE FIELD
(E.G. ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, POLITICAL OR EVEN CONSULAR), AND
AT A TIME WHEN OUR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTEREST (ROCAP)
IS DECLINING. UNLESS THE US HAS A PROGRAM OBJECTIVE LEADING
TOWARD REGIONALIZATION, OR GREATER REGIONAL CONTACT AND COORDINATION,
AMONG CENTRAL AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENTS, DESIGNED TO COMP-
LEMENT OTHER REGIONAL US INTEGRATION OBJECTIVES, AN EXTRA
BUREAUCRATIC LAYERING MAINLY TO IMPROVE REGIONAL LABOR
REPORTING SEEMS UNNECESSARY. CERTAINLY IT APPEARS CONTRADICTORY
TO CURRENT ZBB CONCEPTS, AND TO POLICIES AND PROGRAMS TO
REDUCE US PRESENCE ABROAD, SINCE THE MOVE WILL CREAT PRESSURE
TO INCREASE STAFFS. IMPROVED GUIDANCE ON LABOR REPORTING AND
PROGRAMS FROM WASHINGTON LEVEL COULD BE THE ANSWER TO WHATEVER
PROBLEMS AND DEFICIENCIES EXIST. WE WOULD SEE SOME ADVANTAGE
ALSO IN CLOSER COORDINATION BETWEEN THE ROCAP POLITICAL
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AND THE AIFLD REGIONAL OFFICER IN GUATEMALA, IN ORDER THAT
WE MIGHT BE PROVIDED BETTER INFORMATION ON THE NATURE AND IMPACT
OF REGIONA AIFLD PROGRAMS, A FUNCTION WHICH COULD NOT EASILY BE
PERFORMED BY REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE (RLA) LOCATED AT ANOTHER
POST. CROSS-DISTRIBUTION OF ALL LABOR REPORTING MESSAGES AMONG
ALL CENTRAL AMERICAN POSTS, AND WITH MEXICO ON ORIT ACTIVITIES,
AND SENDING OF INFORMATION FROM WASHINGTON ON AIFLD
PROGRAMS, NOW ESPECIALLY AUDS, SHOULD BE CONTINUED AND INTENSIFIED.

4. IF THE PROPOSED POSITION IS ESTABLISHED IN TEGUCIGALPA WE
WILL COOPERATE AND COORDINATE WITH THE RLA TO THE EXTENT OF OUR
CAPABILITIES, SEND HIM COPIES OF OUR REPORTS, AND PROVIDE SUP-
PORT DURING HIS VISITS. WE BELIEVE THERE WILL BE MANAGEMENT PRO-
BPLES, HOWEVER, IF THE PROCESS GOES BEYOND THAT TOWARD "EVENTUAL
FULL REGIONALIZATION OF THE LABOR FUNCTION." WE WOULD ENTER-
TAIN AND ACT UPON SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVED LABOR REPORTING, WHETHER
COMING FROM THE RLA OR WASHINGTON, BUT BELIEVE WE MUST MAINTAIN
CONTROL OVER PRIORITIES AND DIVISION OF THE POLITICAL/
LABOR OFFICER'S TIME, BETWEEN LABOR AFFAIRS AND OTHER POLITICAL
REPORTING ACTIVITIES. CERTAINLY WITH THE ALREADY INTENSE LABOR
ACTIVITY (MAINLY UCS) WE CANNOT ALLOW ANY APPRECIABLE INCREASE
OF THEAT OFFICER'S TIME TO THE LABOR FUNCTION (AT PRESENT 38

PER CENT), GIVEN THE CURRENT HEAVY DEMAND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND
OTHER POLITICAL REPORTING, WITHOUT HAVING TO INDICATE A NEED
FOR ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION OF OFFICER PERSONNEL TO THIS POST.

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